

MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
FIRE ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT
MARCH 2001

OFFICE OF THE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR

Commission Office

The following items were discussed at the March 8, 2001 meeting of the Fire and Rescue Commission:

- Reallocation requests of Senator Amoss funds were approved for the Cabin John Park and Gaithersburg-Washington Grove VFDs.
- A request from the Conduit Road Fire Board to purchase a 1992 Jeep Cherokee from the County was approved. This vehicle will be maintained and operated with nontax funds.
- The disposal of two Damascus VFD support vehicles was approved.
- A resolution was adopted approving amendments to the *Integrated Emergency Command Structure* regulation.
- A motion was passed to require the Cabin John Park VFD rescue squad be reviewed by the Joint Health and Safety Committee prior to the unit being placed into operation with DFRS personnel.

Research and Planning

Emergency Management

Hurricane Conference – Nemchin, Krumlauf, Talbott and I attended the National Hurricane Conference April 9-13th. It was first time in two decades that the conference had been held in the Washington area. New FEMA Director Allbaugh gave one of the keynote speeches but announced no new programs. He emphasized “shared responsibility between local, state, and federal officials” and promised more “technical support” in all programs. National Weather Service officials shared information on new technologies in place to improve weather projections. Number of technical workshops emphasized inland flooding threats after lessons learned from Hurricane Floyd, changes to federal funding law Stafford Act, improvements to evacuation strategies, and improvements to debris management and communications.

Hurricane Prediction – Dr. Gray, renowned Hurricane specialist, predicts that named hurricanes will be up an estimated 16% this year from last year, with two category 3 or greater hurricanes anticipated.

EOP – Council approved the year 2000 revisions to the Emergency Operations Plan as required by County law. Gordon A. Aoyagi and Kathleen Henning testified at earlier work sessions, and Council approved EOP, after some discussion, on consent calendar. Terrorism Annex will be reviewed and revised again this year due to significant on-going regional planning and updates for bio- terrorism planning.

Annex O – Approval of the Fire Rescue Disaster Plan, Annex O of the Emergency Operations Plan, was deferred. Council returned it to the Fire Rescue Commission and the Emergency Management Group to resolve approval process/ regulation requirements.

Schools – Meetings have been held with public school safety and security officials to discuss joint exercises between EMG and school officials. Terrorism, school violence, and hazardous materials reporting of chemical inventories reviewed.

EMG – Plans for quarterly EMG May 9th meeting underway. Annual work program and exercise plan under development. Technical committee headed by Deputy Chief Jarboe updating Annex CC –Terrorism. Meetings held with State officials about status of mitigation planning and grants.

Public Awareness – National Hurricane Conference was kickoff for first Hurricane Awareness Week, to be held May 21-25th. Hurricane plane that flies into storms will be on display in Baltimore May 9th. National Lightning awareness week planned for June. State of Maryland received Public Awareness Award at National Hurricane Conference for interactive children's CD on hurricanes and awareness brochures. McMillion extended thanks to all the counties who helped with development and distribution of hurricane brochures.

Training – K. Henning attended federally sponsored DMORT training at the Emergency Management Institute. Program covered responses to fatality plane crashes, forensic identifications, logistical support and new computer tracking programs. Mid-Atlantic DOGS from County demonstrated cadaver searching. Only federal mobile temporary morgue unit is currently stored in federal warehouse in Gaithersburg.

IAEM – K. Henning attended the International Association of Emergency Managers mid-year meeting at the Emergency Management Institute. FEMA officials reviewed changes to mitigation funding and national strategies for state and local funding under new administration. K. Henning named co-chair of Terrorism Work Group for IAEM. New emphasis with local jurisdictions are programs to address school violence.

LHSC – K. Henning attended mid-year meeting of the Lowes Home Safety Council. NFPA announced plans to add disaster preparedness modules to Risk Watch program. LHSC is de-emphasizing original relationship with LOWES to broaden national support of home safety programs. Hurricane and flooding PSAs will be issued this spring.

Pools – Meeting scheduled with pool managers and pool owners for April 25th to discuss improvements to compliance with hazardous materials regulation. Joint meeting will be held with Public Health representative.

Community Education Safety Section

- Attended various Staff meetings.
- Replied, by phone or email, to 73 citizen, 100 FD, & 30 “other” (media, county gov’t) inquires.
- Met with various task forces, Child Passenger Safety, Pedestrian Safety, etc. totaling 7 hours.
- Met with various department staff and members totaling 13 hours.
- Composed various Memos and Safety Tips for dissemination to all work locations.
- Assisted with “Change Your Clock/Battery” outreach effort. (8 hours). Approximately 2,554 brochures, 8 smoke alarms, & 27 batteries disseminated. 1,500 Adults & 303 Kids interacted with. 1,100 homes, several malls and shopping centers, and apartment complexes visited.
- Designed door hanger for outreach effort. (2 hours)
- Community Safety Education Steering Committee meetings. 3 hours.
- Scheduled various community education events and classes (10 hours).
- Dealt with various personnel and program issues relating to community safety.
- Various correspondences composed and disseminated.
- Fire Safety lectures for school, civic, and business groups impacting over 185 people.
- Attended Pedestrian Safety Blue Ribbon Panel sub-committee meeting. 2 hours.
- 4 home inspections impacting 12 people conducted.
- Fire Safety programs presented to four nursing home facilities impacting over 200 people – staff and residents.
- 2 SafeHouse events with 350 adults and 500 kids impacted.
- Budget related issues. 4 hours.
- Taped MCFRS Today video.
- Assisted with disseminating S.I.O.N. survey to field personnel. Collected survey’s (4 hours).
- Paper work and issues relating to the CPSS Class held at the PSTA. 15 DFRS personnel certified.
- Assisted with PowerPoint presentation for community outreach meeting re Berryville Rd. fire (1.5 hours).
- Career Day goodie box for 2nd grade class.
- Discussed new Gaithersburg smoke alarm ordinance with city FM.
- Operation Extinguish management 4 hours.
- Birthday party kit designed and assembled.
- Station 30-B conducted fire truck birthday party visit.
- Develop & FAX safety tips to media.
- Developed & disseminated Press Release.
- Assisted with Press Conference relating to Bluhill Rd. fire (6 hours). F3 Pete Andreallo put in many long hours assisting family.
- Visit w/ FS21-A shift and FS30 – B shift.
- Conducted 2 interviews relating to CPSS Program Manager. 2 Hours.

Corporate Development Services:

Automation Section

- Attended various Mobile Data committee meetings and County Computer User Group meetings.
- Began preparation of annual NFPA Report submission.
- Completed CY2000 Incident and Unit Response Statistical Report
- Prepared software/data on field-assigned computers for transfer to replacement computers that are being provided under the Desktop Modernization Program.
- Re-mastered computers for Headquarters' staff that have been temporarily re-assigned as part of the 12th Floor, EOB renovation project.
- Responded to 100+ requests for hardware and software assistance from various components of the MCFRS.
- Responded to 7 requests for statistical data and information from various components of the MCFRS and the public.
- Submitted a Request for Quotation document for the acquisition of automation training vouchers to the Office of Procurement for advertising.

Fleet and Facilities Section

Fleet Activities

- Continued contract management efforts for the acquisition of replacement brush trucks and EMS units.
- Eleven (11) new 2000 Ford Crown Victoria sedans have been outfitted and issued to the Fire Marshal, Deputy Chief - Bureau of Program Support Services, Assistant Chief – PSTA, District Chief – Code Enforcement, EMS, and Labor Relations, Internal Affairs Investigator, Code Enforcement (3), and the Public Information Officer.
- Continued participation in the PS 2000 project relating to mobile voice and data equipment.
- The refurbishment of stock #1862030 was completed. The pumper is assigned to the Gaithersburg-Washington Grove Fire Department.
- Coordinated placing six (6) EMS units in-service. The units are assigned to Gaithersburg-Washington Grove (2), Damascus, Kensington, Rockville, and Upper Montgomery County Volunteer Fire Departments.

- Received and began review of comments for the Vehicle Maintenance Record Management software.
- Held a pre-proposal meeting with potential vendors for the acquisition of three (3) pumpers. Issued a specification amendment.
- Worked with the Division of Fleet Management Services and the Office of Management of Budget to upgrade and acquire additional fleet vehicles for the Bureau of Operations and Bureau of Life Safety Services.

Facilities Activities

- Attended progress meetings for the Sandy Spring Fire Station 4 construction project. Substantial completion is due September 2001.
- Participated with the Collapse Rescue Team representatives in the review and approval of plans for a Collapse Rescue Team storage building. This project is in the permitting process phase.
- Performed project management duties for the Takoma Park Fire Station 2 replacement project. The schematic floor plans are nearing completion. Related processes are in place.
- Reported to the County Council's Public Safety Committee on the status of Silver Spring FS #1 and Sandy Spring FS #4.

Property Section

- Completed the procurement process for several Safety Rebate initiatives.
- Evaluated bids associated with IFB for protective apparel and forwarded a recommendation to the Office of Procurement.
- Processed 272 property transactions during the month of March 2001.
- Assisted the Office of Emergency Management with the transfer of responsibility for severe weather notification paging.
- Started design and procurement requirements for items associated with a number of special Spring time events (Pike's Peek Run, Kemper Open, Administrative Staff Support Recognition Luncheon).

DIVISION OF VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

- Attended the firefighters ceremony and press conference with the County Executive, et al.
- Conducted a unit citation with Chief Strock for personnel at Sta. 9.

- Attended two meetings (back-to-back) regarding the Berryville Rd. fire – first, with the Fire Administrator, Chief Strock and Dep. Chief Allwang and then with N. Dacek
- Met at Sta. 4 with SSVFD management regarding an administrative issue.
- Attended another meeting with RVFD management regarding the Berryville Rd. fire.
- Attended the COG Chiefs Committee meeting at the IAFC Headquarters.
- Met with the Fire Administrator, Chiefs Strock, Jackson and Clemens regarding command officer development.
- Attended the Senior Staff meeting.
- Met with the Mont. Co. Chamber of Commerce Awards Committee.
- Attended a Leadership Conference in Florida and visited family – for a five-day period.
- Attended the critique at the PSTA for the Berryville Rd. fire.
- Attended the Safety Committee meeting regarding current injuries.
- Attended the Laytonsville District VFD banquet.
- Attended the Fire Board, Human Resources, Safety and Training Committee, FRC, Fire-Rescue Association and Operations Committee meetings.
- Mediated personal, personnel and/or sensitive issues with various LFRDs, etc.

DIVISION OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

BUREAU OF OPERATIONS

Administration

There was a significant fire on Berryville Road on March 7th. Following this incident significant time has been spent reviewing the operation, meeting with staff, neighbors, two local community groups, and others to address a variety of concerns.

The Bureau is working with other segments of MCFRS to develop and acquire upgrades for the District Command Vehicles. This will provide an appropriate platform for PS 2000 implementation and dramatically improve command and control capabilities on the scene of incidents.

We participated in the finalization of the Mutual Aid Operations Plan, which was adopted by the Council of Governments Fire Chiefs Committee in March. This

document commits all signatories to a standard practice designed to effectively coordinate command when operating with units from multiple jurisdictions.

Safety

Members of the Safety Team delivered Safety Dispatch Training to all DFRS personnel over the past six weeks.

With the assistance of DTC William Ale and Captain Lee Silverman an injury investigation program was written for the Palm Pilots, compatible with an Access data base. This will allow injury investigators to complete most all of the work in the field and then upload the information from the Palm to the desktop. The Access program developed by DTC Ale provides a variety of reports.

The Safety Team has developed and distributed its first Lessons Learned bulletin from a recent fire incident. Additional bulletins will be issued in the next few weeks on other significant incidents.

In conjunction with the Safety Policy Steering Committee plans are being made for spending a safety rebate from OMB as the result of training district chiefs as injury investigators and completing reporting of 80% of all injuries within 24 hours to the claims service.

Six SCBA technicians completed their bi-annual re-certification.

Specialty Teams

Collapse Rescue/Urban Search and Rescue:

The team is working with the US Secret Service to develop some training for those who protect the President. This is a yearly exercise.

Swiftwater Rescue Team

Hazardous Materials Response Team

River Rescue Team

BUREAU OF PROGRAM SUPPORT SERVICES

Administration

District Chief David Steckel, J.D. will take the position in the Bureau that was made vacant due to the promotion of Chief Tom Carr to Assistant Chief as of April 8, 2001.

Wellness -

Recruitment/CPAT

Communications

Master Firefighter/Paramedic Michelle Ruth will received the honor of Telecommunicator of the year from the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials, Inc. in Dover, DE on April 19, 2001. Her name was submitted as a nominee for the Mid-Eastern Chapter of APCO for work done on September 6, 2000 where professionalism lead to a positive outcome in a very dangerous medical condition and complicated situation which included criminal activity. We congratulate MFP Ruth and join with Montgomery County in honoring all of our Public Safety Telecommunicators on April 8-14, 2001 which is National Public Safety Telecommunications Week.

Representatives from Emergent, John Hopkins University, and The National Institute of Justice visited ECC for a review and demonstration of the TRP-1000.

ECC assisted the PSTA with training Communication SOPs and ECC Operations to the current recruit class.

The Continuing Dispatch Education subject of the month was, Poisoning.

ECC - 911 facts

Answered: 9090 911 calls

Answered: 986 911 overflow calls (unsorted)

In/out Administrative calls; 20,143

Training

Recruit Class #19 continues with 38 recruits currently taking Essentials of Firefighting.

March statistics for Emergency Vehicle Driver Testing for career personnel are:

10 Written Exams

11 Practical Exams

One volunteer CRT (Cardiac Rescue Technician) was awarded charge status in March.

EMT-Paramedic Class #21, the night time class which began on September 11th, continues with 20 students (six career and 14 volunteer).

EMT-Paramedic Class #22, the daytime class began on January 8th, continues with 12 students (11 career and one volunteer).

CPR Update for MCFRS 2001 has been delivered to all the stations as an STP (Standardized Training Program).

BUREAU OF LIFE SAFETY SERVICES

Fire Code Enforcement

Fire and Explosive Investigation

In March, Fire and Explosive Investigators investigated 15 accidental fires and 16 criminal incidents. The Bomb Squad responded to a total of 8 explosive incidents; of these incidents, five were for suspicious packages. The total estimated dollar loss for accidental fires was \$ 2,132,300 and \$ 18,100 for criminal incidents. Investigators also investigated numerous bomb threats at public schools and one explosion involving a vehicle.

Investigators made 12 arrests this month involving both adults and juveniles for arson and bomb threat offences.

The house explosion and fire that occurred in the Hillandale area on January 1st 2001 is still being investigated. Investigators are waiting for lab analysis of the furnace and hot water heater and more information regarding the victims.